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REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH ON LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA.

BY- MARQUARDT, WILLIAM F.

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A REVIEW OF RESEARCH CATEGORIZES LITERACY AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA AS FOLLOWS--(1) GENERAL REPORTS OF THE NUMBERS AND OCCUPATIONAL TYPES OF ILLITERATES IN EACH COUNTRY--(2) REPORTS OF THE ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PUBLIC, PRIVATE, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GROUPS IN PROMOTING LITERACY AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION--(3) STUDIES EVALUATING THE EFFECTS OF LITERACY AND ADULT BASIC EDUCATION ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT--(4) STUDIES EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SPECIFIC METHODS, MATERIALS, OR MEDIA IN TEACHING DESIRED SKILLS OR BEHAVIOR TO PARTICULAR GROUPS OF ILLITERATE AND UNEDUCATED PEOPLE--(5) BACKGROUND STUDIES OF THE SOCIAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, OR LANGUAGE BEHAVIOR PATTERNS OF SPECIFIC CLIENTELE GROUPS. RELATED DISSEMINATION AND DOCUMENTATION EFFORTS CONDUCTED IN THIS FIELD BY THE ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON ADULT EDUCATION, THE CENTRO REGIONAL DE LA EDUCACION FUNDAMENTAL PARA LA AMERICA LATINA, AND THE ERIC CLEARINGHOUSE ON LITERACY, ARE ALSO DESCRIBED. (THE DOCUMENT INCLUDES A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ABOUT 190 REFERENCES.) (LY)

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# REVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH ON LITERACY AND ADULT EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA

William F. Marquardt
Professor of Education
University of Illinois

Richard W. Cortright, Director
Adult Education Clearinghouse
National Association for Public School Adult Education

"If you gotta ask, man, you ain't never gonna know," Satchmo Armstrong once said when someone asked him, "What is jazz?" Such an answer might also fit the question, "What is the state of our knowledge of what to do about illiteracy and ignorance in Latin America." But the question has been asked in serious company accustomed to thoughtful answers--answers that guide and energize. So we will try to examine what is speculated, what is known, what is being investigated, and what we need to know most in order to establish contact with that vast terra incognita in Latin America comprising the illiterate and the unlearned.

We might begin by observing that we still do not know how many persons in Latin America are illiterate according to each of several definitions of literacy: (a) the ability to give the spoken equivalent of a few printed words, phrases, or sentences and to write at least one's own name; (b) the ability to understand and to answer in writing a simple letter; (c) the ability to use reading and writing in the ways an interested and active participant in a literate society would. Since the counting of illiterates in most countries of Latin America is based upon definition (a) or (b)--the definition UNESCO has used in its surveys of world illiteracy--and since the realization of definition (c) is the goal of literacy and basic adult education, we must be realistic and conclude that the statistics we have are an understatement of the dimensions of the problem of curing illiteracy in Latin America.

Despite the unreliability of our statistics there is ample indication that our leaders are aware that the problem of illiteracy in Latin America is an immense one. The President of the United States, the Pope, and the ministers of education in various world congresses have in recent years called attention to the urgency of the problem. The World Congress on the Eradication of Illiteracy held under the auspices of UNESCO in Teheran, Iran in 1965 revealed in one of its publications, Statistics of Illiteracy (1965), that even though in Latin America, as in many parts of the world, "the percentage of illiteracy is decreasing...we are confronted by the paradox of higher percentages of literacy in all countries and the larger number of illiterates each year." (Rex, 1967, 7)

To understand how concerned the leaders in Latin America are about the problem of illiteracy in their countries we need only review the history of official gatherings at various levels of government across national boundaries assembled to deal with the problem.

In her historical review of the activities of the Organization of American States (OAS) in the field of education, Estellita Hart (1965), writing on the occasion

of the celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the "Interamerican System," reveals that beginning with the Ninth International American Conference, which took place in 1948 in Bogota, where the Union of American Republics transformed itself into the Organization of American States, the OAS took the responsibility of assuring every person in Latin America an education (Hart, 1965, 77).

The first step the OAS took was to start a series of inter-American seminars dealing with education. The first of these, Seminario Regional Sobre Educación en America Latina, held in Caracas the summer of 1948 explored five topics, the first of which was "Alfabetizacion y educacion de adultos." After this preliminary exploration, a special "Seminario Interamericano Sobre Alfabetizacion y Educacion de Adultos" was held in Petropolis, Brazil, from July 28 to September 3, 1949.

In the reorganized OAS the body charged with carrying on the struggle against illiteracy was the "Consejo Interamericano Cultural." In its first meeting in Mexico City in 1951 the major problem discussed was "las actividades necesarias para corregir la elevada tasa de analfabetismo en la America Latina." (Hart, 1965, 78)

In the second meeting of the Consejo in Lima in 1956, particularly at the Second Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Education being held at the same time, the fight against illiteracy was again the major concern. At the third meeting of the Consejo held in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1959 plans were made for carrying on research and the publication of information regarding education in the Americas through the establishment of an educational center. At the next meeting of the Consejo held in conjunction with the third Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Education in Bogota in 1963 an important development was the resolution that the OAS would carry on continuous evaluation of progress in education, science, and cultural affairs throughout Latin America for the purpose of giving direction to the services that the OAS was carrying on in these fields.

An important step for the OAS was the declaration of the Tenth Inter-American Conference in Caracas in 1954 calling for hemispheric cooperation in educational matters and particularly in "la erradicacion del analfabetismo,...la educacion de adultos y la extension educativa" (Hart, 1965, 79).

Another important event in the struggle against illiteracy in Latin America was the meeting in Bogota in September 1960 of a committee of representatives of the twenty-one republics convoked by the Council of the OAS for the purpose of working out new means of economic cooperation. Out of this meeting grew the one in August, 1961, held at Punte del Este, Uruguay in which the Alliance for Progress was formed. At this meeting the importance of education in the economic and social development of the American nations was affirmed and a resolution was passed to "eliminar el analfabetismo en los adultos del Hemisferio...para 1970" (Hart, 1965, 81).

In addition to knowing about the developments in intergovernmental involvement in the fight against illiteracy in Latin America it is useful to note that a number of international seminars also made important contributions. They can be listed as follows:

1. Tercer Congreso Iberoamericano de Educacion held at Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic in 1957.

2. Conferencia Mundial de Educacion de Adultos in Montreal, Canada in 1960.

3. Primera Reunion del Comite Internacional de la UNESCO para el Desarrollo de la Educación de Adultos held in Paris in 1961.

4. Comite Internacional de Expertos de la UNESCO en Materia de Alfabetizacion in Paris in 1962 and in 1964.

5. Conferencia Sobre Educación y Desarrollo Economico y Social en America Latina in Santiago, Chile in 1962 (Cespedes, 1964a, 86).

A sixth seminar, the "Seminario Interamericano de Educacion Rural", merits a closer look. Organized by the Ministry of Education of Venezuela, it met in Rubio, Venezuela in 1964, attended by the representatives of the ministries of most Latin American countries, of UNESCO, of AID, and of various other high-level organizations. Its main purpose was to review the ten years' work of the Interamerican Center for Rural Education and to improve rural education, including literacy education, in particular areas, ("Seminario Interamericano de Educacion Rural," 1964, 81).

A seminar of interest for its pinpointing of the problems in the fight against illiteracy was the "Seminario Iberoamericano de Alfabetizacion" which met in Madrid, Spain in September, 1964. The topics discussed constitute a comprehensive plan of battle:

1. The present situation regarding illiteracy in Spain, Portugal, and Ibero-America.

2. Educational planning and illiteracy.

3. Literacy in suburban sections.

4. Literacy in rural zones.

5. Literacy in the indigenous nuclei of population.

6. Literacy for "los inadaptados" (misfits).

7. Activities of private education in literacy work.

8. Mass information media and literacy.

9. Reading materials for new readers.

10. Literacy and the problem of classrooms for instruction.

11. Incorporating the new literate into the socio-economic stream.

12. Teaching immigrants literacy.

13. Study of costs of literacy programs.

The final report of this seminar contains thirty-one conclusions and fifty-nine recommendations which had been approved by its participants, ("Seminario Iberoamerican de Alfabetizacion," 1964).

Two other seminars that have had a role in literacy education in Latin America because representatives of programs in Latin America participated in them differ from those discussed above in that they were convoked by private organizations. One was the World Conference on Literacy and Society which took place in Rome in 1962. It developed the theme that illiteracy was a "human condition" that could be alleviated, (World Conference: Literacy and Society, 1962, 6). The best-known organization represented was the Fundacion Alfabetizadora Laubach (FAL), whose programs in Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Guatemala were discussed and evaluated.

The second of these conferences of private workers in literacy education was the International Literacy Seminar held in Jerusalem, Jordan, May 17 to June 11, 1965. It was called by the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, a Protestant organization with headquarters in New York through which many North American church agencies funnel their resources and energies in the fight against illiteracy in Latin America.

Among the forty-nine participants in this seminar from all over the world more than a fourth were representatives of church-sponsored programs in Latin America. In their four weeks of deliberation they produced the material for the World Literacy Manual (1967), an effort to translate the results of experience and research into guidance for the literacy worker. It explores the nature of the adult illiterate learner, his learning problems, ways of motivating him, ways of preparing teaching materials, ways of preparing teachers, ways of making literacy functional, and ways of adapting literature to the needs of the new literates.

The conferences and seminars, private and governmental, discussed above provide only a partial view of the efforts being made to fight illiteracy in Latin America. For a full view of the efforts being made to bring basic education to all in Latin America and of the investigation and experimentation being carried on to improve the effectiveness of these efforts it is necessary to have access to key publications of the following categories: (a) publications of private religious or philanthropic organizations; (b) publications of UNESCO devoted to giving direction to the fight against illiteracy; (c) publications stimulated or supported by such agencies of the United States government interested in education and social and economic development in Latin America as the Bureau of Latin American Affairs, the Peace Corps, AID, the Alliance for Progress, etc.; (d) publications supported by the Organization of American States; (e) publications supported by the agencies in the various Latin American governments concerned with adult education; (f) doctoral research conducted in a few North American universities which have literacy training programs, linguistic programs, or Latin American studies programs that make investigation of literacy and

basic education in Latin America a relevant area; (g) graduate or post-doctoral research conducted in a few educational research centers in Latin American universities.

Because the sources of information regarding literacy and basic adult education in Latin America are scattered reviewing and communicating the results of research in this area is difficult. Fortunately the recently established Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) system of the U. S. Office of Education includes a Clearinghouse on Adult Education, located at Syracuse University and one on literacy located at the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, D. C.

ERIC/AE has begun to collect published and unpublished materials which contribute to an understanding of:

> "1. The intellectual, psychological, social and physical characteristics of adults which significantly affect their learning processes.
>
> "2. The combination of career and personal interests and motives which influence the educational needs of adults.
>
> "3. The methods of instruction, independent study, program planning, and evaluation which are effective in the education and training of adults.
>
> "4. The system of institutional arrangements for providing adult education and training, as well as the economic, social, and philosophical factors which govern the operation and growth of this system." (ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult Education, 1967, 1)

This Clearinghouse began in October 1967 to provide references in response to requests for information on specific topics. A request by the authors for references regarding research on literacy and adult basic education in Latin America produced a list of seventeen items. Two of these are useful bibliographical aids for the student of literacy and adult education in Latin America: How to Use AEA Clearinghouse on Adult Education in Latin America, A Manual (Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., 1966) and A Bibliography for Use in the Preparation of Materials for Adult Literacy Education in Brazil (1967). The other fifteen items were equally relevant for the study of literacy and adult education in Latin America and are included in the references selected for discussion in this review.

From the director of ERIC/Literacy there was also a response. It contained the names of persons who had worked on literacy projects in Latin America and an indication that ERIC/Literacy would collect information "on literacy only (with emphasis on...the relation to language, linguistics, and anthropology)" (Nussbaum, 1967).

The fact, however, that many other references that figure in this review did not appear on the lists provided by ERIC/AE and ERIC/Literacy suggests that they have not yet realized their promise. It may be some time before they will be able

to retrieve all relevant data on any question both from their own computer storage and from that of Central ERIC in Washington in linkage with the computer storage systems of seventeen other ERIC clearinghouses. For the time being, then, the search for references in scattered bibliographical indexes, library card catalogues, periodicals, lists of abstracts, government bulletins, and letters from friends and colleagues is still recommended procedure for the study of literacy and basic adult education in Latin America.

In addition to the newer bibliographies and the ERIC clearinghouses just described there are older general bibliographical resources for the student of literacy and adult education in Latin America to use. Among the more useful are those by Ward (1961), the Laubachs (1961), and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (1964).

For detailed, up-to-date accounts regarding developments and investigations in particular countries in this field the pamphlets, reports, and journals listed in the bibliography below as published by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States are essential. These should be supplemented with the reports and pamphlets issued by the ministries of education of the particular Latin American countries, as exemplified in the bibliography.

For statistics and assessment of literacy and basic adult education in Latin America in relationship to their development throughout the rest of the world the best sources are the UNESCO Monographs on Fundamental Education. Of the twelve published between 1949 and 1959, three deal specifically with some aspect of the problem as related to Latin America: Hughes (1951), The Haiti Pilot Project (1952), Marier (1954). Two monographs trace the progress of particular countries in Latin America with respect to literacy and basic adult education: Progress of Literacy in Various Countries (1955) and World Illiteracy at Mid-Century: A Statistical Study (1957).

A more recent UNESCO publication revealing the state of literacy in Latin America as compared with the rest of the world is one which grew out of the Teheran Conference and the campaign that followed--World Campaign for Universal Literacy (1965). On the basis of the data in that document, in Fact Sheets issued by the Books for People Fund, Inc. (1962, 1963), and in miscellaneous reports one of the authors of this review in a recent assessment of current developments in this area in Latin America concludes that

> the obstacles to a literate Latin America are numerous but not overwhelming--if curbs to the vast increase of population are carried out successfully, if the wisdom of integrated long-range functional education planning includes adult basic education, and if effective educational materials are produced." (Cortright, 1966, 182)

In assessing the usefulness of the materials just discussed for enabling one to understand the extent of illiteracy in Latin America and the measures being taken to

reduce it the first question that comes to mind concerns the criteria in the different countries of Latin America for determining whether a person is to be classified as literate or illiterate. There is no indication in most of the reports of the status of literacy in the various countries as to what skills the persons classed as literate actually have. Nor is there always indication in the documents of the age used as a departure point for classifying illiterates. Age fifteen is the UNESCO criterion for classifying young people as illiterate, but some countries use a different age or none at all and thus make the statistics of the different countries uncomparable.

What seems to be needed in data-gathering on literacy and basic education in Latin America is:

1. A set of criteria specified as attitudes, understandings, skills, and habits constituting the behavior of literate persons in a particular society.

2. Simple, reliable instruments for measuring the extent to which a testee meets these criteria.

Such instruments for gathering data would put into the hands of literacy and basic adult education teachers' information enabling them to assess the individual needs of the adults they deal with. Also, exaggerated claims made in connection with literacy campaigns might disappear when reports would be expected to specify precisely what sort of behavior the new literates are capable of.

Turning now in our survey from studies which describe the extent of the problem and the measures being taken to solve it to those which assess the effect of literacy and basic adult education on other activities, we find this area of investigation still relatively neglected. Typical in these studies is the concern being shown about the extent to which illiteracy holds up growth in other activities. Contractors in Bogota, for example, are reported to have begun literacy classes at construction sites so as to reduce the high percentage of accidents caused by illiterate workers (Fundacion Alfabetizador Laubach, 1965). Wharton, who studied the impact of technical assistance on villages in Brazil, states that basic and literacy education help increase agricultural productivity because:

1. "They facilitate or improve the transmission of further knowledge."

2. They are "directly useful in production." They enable a farmer "to keep records,...to make simple calculations,...to perform simple kinds of budgeting,...to determine optimum factor combinations, to reduce costs, and to increase output." (Wharton, 1965, 208; see also Wharton, 1960)

Other reports show literacy and basic education having effect on a variety of aspects of life. Investment in basic education has been found to have direct relationship to economic growth. (Harbison and Myers, 1964, 10) Illiteracy has been found to retard development in Latin America. (Greenough, 1965, 32) A study of illiterates in Guatemala reveals that functional literacy is significantly linked

to sex, age, ethnic group, occupation, education, and income. (Mendez and Waisanen, 1964) A study in Mexico revealed a link between literacy and lower mortality. (Benitez, 1959) Another study of five Colombian villages found functional literacy to be linked with exposure to "mas media,...empathy, agricultural and home innovativeness, achievement motivation, farm size, trips to urban centers, political knowledge, and sociometric opinion leaderships." (Rogers and Herzog, 1966, 203) A study of the impact of a literacy program in a village in Guatemala reports that:

1. Literacy classes in a village tend to bring out the brightest and most highly motivated individuals.

2. Literates tend to own more land and use better economic practices than illiterates; literates tend to have literate parents, particularly mothers, more often than illiterates do; show greater sense of community; see the national government as "more oriented toward social welfare and help for the campesino"; express a "greater awareness of the causes of illness"; surpass in "frequency of bathing, cleaning teeth, and in the number of remedies kept in the home"; have a more varied diet; travel more often and farther; listen more often to the radio, have a better memory of programs, and are more often interested in news and information rather than music and entertainment; see movies more often.

3. Literates who put their literacy to use most in letter writing and reading of books, periodicals, and newspapers tend to score highest on understanding of cause of illness, on migration, on travel, on movie attendance, and on psychological functioning and are less frustrated than the brightest ... individuals as a group or literates as a group. (Wright, Rich, Allen, 1967, 15-17)

A third type of literature of interest to the student of literacy and basic adult education in Latin America is that which deals with the development and effectiveness of particular programs, projects, or organizations which have attracted unusual attention or support. Although slow in getting involved deeply in this area of education, the various national governments are now providing much of the ... financing and organizational drive behind developments in this area. Most of them have set up bureaus or agencies charged with raising literacy and basic adult education levels in their countries. The structures some of these countries established to develop programs to pursue these goals are described along with some of their latest programs in the Yearbook of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Development in Latin America 1964 (1966, 76-82).

Among the more striking developments growing out of the activities of government organizations are the following:

1. The National Commission for Peoples' Education created in 1936 in Mexico by President Cardenas and the National Campaign Against Illiteracy initiated by President Camacho in 1944 in which several hundred thousand adults were taught. (Director General de Analfabetizacion y Educacion Extraescolar, 1956, 19 ff.; Murillo, 1950, 10 ff.)

2. La Mision Andina of Ecuador which was established in 1954 with the support of the United Nations and which functions in cooperation with the Ministries of Social Planning, Education, and Development (FOMENTO) to bring about "the integration of the campesino" in the Andes area with the general development of the country.

3. The National Literacy and Adult Education Seminar established in 1963 in Bolivia to coordinate and improve the adult education activities of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Rural Affairs.

4. The National Industrial Apprenticeship Service (SENAI) and the National Commercial Apprenticeship Service (SENAC) of Brazil which in 1964 gave training in arts and crafts to more than 50,000 students aged fourteen and over.

5. The Fundamental Educational Movement of the Bishops Conference of Brazil (MEB) which was made an official organ for a campaign against illiteracy by decree in 1963.

6. The Joao Batista de Amaral Foundation (TV Escola), the Educational Foundation of Brasilia, and the Radiophonic and TV Schools of Sao Paulo and Minas Gerais, which are involved in giving radio and television courses to combat illiteracy.

7. The National Council for the Protection of the Indians (CNPI) which is concerned with providing literacy training and basic education for the Indians of Brazil.

The foregoing government inspired programs are a type of activity that is increasingly important, but they do not exhaust the activities in this area in Latin America. In a culture in which education was historically the function of the church private programs must also be studied by the student concerned with improving literacy and basic adult education. The best known of these are those conducted or supported by religious institutions. Laubach Literacy, Incorporated has programs in Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil. In Mexico this organization has become entirely indigenous, bearing the name Fundacion Alfabetizadora Laubach. In May 1967 the Reader's Digest published a Laubach cartilla for teaching literacy in Spanish, in Mexico and Central America. In Colombia the Laubach organization is involved in training and directing Peace Corps volunteers in literacy work, in printing the Laubach news letter News For You in Spanish, in conducting a Laubach Training Center at the University of Antioquia, in preparing a Laubach ETV program in Spanish, and in preparing an ETV test in the prison system for the Ministry of Justice. Laubach centers in Brazil and Ecuador are engaged mainly in teaching illiterates, training teachers, and preparing teaching materials. (R. Laubach, 1967) The collecting of information through questionnaires sent to persons trained to teach the Laubach method and the maintaining of careful records on the performance of students is the main reported research on the Laubach programs in Latin America.

Another religious institution carrying on literacy education in Latin America is ALFALIT, which is supported by the Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, a department of the National Council of the Churches of Christ, with

headquarters in New York. ALFALIT is now working in seventeen Latin American countries. Recently it published the World Literacy Manual (1967), mentioned above, which contains essays drawing upon experience in Latin America on such theoretical aspects of literacy education as motivation of adults, adult learning processes, the training of teachers, the preparation of teaching materials, the sociological dimensions of literacy, and the linguistic dimensions of literacy. It also contains a questionnaire used in collecting data at the Jerusalem International Literacy Seminar which could be used for improving literacy materials in Latin America.

Two other major religious organizations involved in literacy and basic adult education in Latin America are the Summer Institute of Linguistics and the Wycliffe Bible Translators. These two organizations work hand-in-hand to bring literacy primarily to the non-Spanish-speaking populations of Latin America. The Wycliffe Bible Translators focus on translating the Bible into the hundreds of Indian tribal or creole languages that have no writing systems because they believe "that non-sectarian versions of this Book are the single most potent force which can be made available to give to these folk access to values and power for living which have infused our own western civilization for good." (Pike, 1964, iii)

The Summer Institute of Linguistics provides the technical skill and research on languages and cultures needed for Bible translation. It has the additional purpose of making the people whose languages it records, describes, and puts into writing functional literates. It has field offices in Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, and Brazil. According to its 1964 Bibliography, out of a total of 1,622 published items its members have produced 322 have been literacy items. These include such types as primers, readers, arithmetics, health books, animal stories, writing aids, and grammar books. In addition it has produced books, monographs, and articles comprising among other things such types of research related to literacy education as grammatical studies, phonological studies, lexical studies, dictionaries, dialect geographies, comparative studies, folklore studies, cultural studies, and pedagogical studies. The tribal languages it has worked with number more than 200--most of them Indian languages. Out of the experience of literacy workers in Latin America in this Institute have come such key guides as Gudschinsky, Handbook of Literacy (1957), Nida, Bible Translating, an Analysis of Principles and Procedures with Special Reference to Aboriginal Languages (1947), and Pike, "Practical Suggestions Toward a Common Orthography for Indian Languages of Mexico," (1938).

Contributions to literacy education in Latin America by particular Catholic Church organizations are no less important than those of Protestant organizations but because of the close bonds between the Catholic Church and government in Latin America literacy campaigns organized by the Church frequently receive support as soon as they are underway from the agencies of government concerned and are sometimes even taken over entirely by them. As a consequence, the Catholic Church does not have as sharp an image as an alphabetization force in Latin America as some of the Protestant organizations do.

Other types of private literacy and basic adult education programs are those carried on by such secular organizations as labor unions, political parties, and

mass media. Reports of their activities and relevant statistics can be found in certain publications of the Pan American Union and in studies published in various Latin American countries, such as: Programs Para Adultos y Su Integracion con los Planes Nacionales de Desarrollo Economico y Social en El Ecuador, el Peru y Venezuela (1965); Servicios de Educacion Tecnica y Formacion Profesional en Argentina, Brasil, Colombia, Peru y Venezuela (1964); Prieto (1959); and Havighurst (1962).

Among private programs that have attracted attention and have been studied are the following:

1. Accion Cultural Popular (ACPO) in Colombia, established in 1948 in Sutatenza to provide radio-schools for adults in rural areas. In 1965 there were "28,535 radio-schools in 916 different towns (or counties), with 240,915 registered students, which represent 3.5 percent of the rural population of the country." (Bernal A., 1967, 24; other studies of this program are: Ferrer-Martin, 1959; Primrose, 1965; Rhoads, 1963; Torres and Corredor, 1961; and Bernal A., 1957)

2. The National Association of Newspapermen in Ecuador.

3. The Cuerpo Civico de Alfabetizacion in Chile.

4. The adult education extension courses of the Popular Universities in Peru, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

These programs are described and assessed by Guy Beneveniste, "Outline of an Adult Education Program for Latin America," (1962).

A third kind of literacy and basic adult education program in Latin America that is neither national nor private but involves public and private organizations of all kinds in the fight against illiteracy is exemplified in the Centro Regional de la Educacion Fundamental para la America Latina, a fundamental-education training center maintained by UNESCO, the Organization of American States, and the Mexican government.

The main function of CREFAL is less to train than to serve as a clearinghouse and research center for the Latin American Fundamental Education Press (LAFEP), which was established by OAS and UNESCO in agreements drawn up in 1950 and in 1954. (Nenneti, 1959, 213-233). It also provided technical information to governments and to organizations involved in fundamental education activities. Through its Fundamental Education Library, which consists of reading centers where groups can gather, read, and discuss problems that beset them, it is bringing knowledge useful for solving community problems to thousands of communities in Nicaragua, Costa Rica Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, and other countries. Because it produces at low cost, simple, attractive reading materials for any organization seeking to get basic knowledge to a greater number of people, LAFEP is involving in ever-widening circles all sorts of groups in fundamental education.

Research conducted by LAFEP consists mainly of the testing of the reading materials it is asked to produce. It has developed a series of tests to determine the effectiveness of the materials in meeting the needs of the persons they are intended for. Through these tests criteria have been developed regarding subject matter, vocabulary level, format, typography, illustrations, form of presentation, syntax, and interest level to insure that each text published would have the widest possible acceptance.

Dr. Rupert East, however, in commenting on the work of LAFEP, doubts "whether a single edition of this type of literature can be ideally suited to the whole of Latin America." He also suggests "that the more elementary the grade of literature the smaller the area in which it can be used, and the earlier the stage of literacy the more necessary it is to adapt the vocabulary and illustrations to the particular readers for whom the books are intended." (East, 1959, 234).

The clash just revealed between two crucial ideas in literacy and fundamental education highlights the need for extensive and continuous research in this area. When one considers the vast number of books and articles of research dealing with the nature, the learning problems, and the needs of the literate portion of the human race, one is shocked at how little published research there is about the illiterate third to half of mankind. The amount of research dealing with the Latin American illiterate, how he reacts to different situations, how he can best be taught the skills he needs in order to interact with the literate half of mankind is small indeed. Much of it is published in out-of-the-way journals, and even more of it is in unpublished reports in the files of miscellaneous government and private agencies. The ERIC Clearinghouses for Adult Education and for Literacy should provide fresh impetus for research in this area through enabling clear distinctions to be made between questions which have been reliably answered and those for which reliable answers are lacking or are being sought.

On the basis of the overview we have just taken of the kinds of studies available for processing by the ERIC computers they can be placed into the following main categories:

1. Reports of the numbers and occupational types of illiterates in different countries of Latin America, with the criteria for and means of identifying individuals in these classes generally unspecified.

2. Reports of the activities of public, private, and supernational organizations and groups in their efforts to promote literacy and basic adult education, which tend to give a positive image of strides being made.

3. Studies of the link between levels of literacy or basic adult education and particular kinds of social and economic development, which tend to prove that literacy and adult education are a good thing.

4. Studies of the effectiveness of various kinds of materials or modes or media of presentation in teaching desired skills or behavior in particular groups of the uneducated in particular areas or activities, which tend to prove that one type of presentation, media, format, printing, visual aid, or arrangement is better than another.

5. Studies of the social, psychological, or language behavior patterns of particular groups of the illiterate and uneducated sometimes in contrast with desired behavior patterns of particular literate groups so as to pinpoint the learning problems in the acquisition of new behavior.

In the selected bibliography below studies illustrating each of these categories are listed. The list is far from exhaustive and many key studies have not been discussed or even listed in the bibliography, nor have all the possible sources of research materials discussed on page five above been tapped.

It is nevertheless manifest at a glance how colossal the imbalance is between what we need to know about the vast no-man's land of the illiterate in order to make it less impenetrable and less harsh and what we do know as contrasted with what decades of research have revealed to us about the world of the literate. To reduce that imbalance we need first of all to increase greatly the rigor and number of studies in the five categories listed above. As to specific questions to be answered we need not look for new ones. The pages listing "Needed Research" in the final three volumes of the UNESCO Monographs on Fundamental Education (Gray, 1957, 267-274; World Illiteracy at Mid-Century, 1957, 192-193; The Provision of Popular Reading Materials, 1959, 288-291) reveal, eloquently enough the irony in our having far greater capacity to design plans for action than to carry them out, expecially in such areas distant from our daily concerns as illiteracy in Latin America.

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